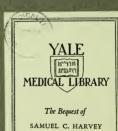
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Boyhood and manhood recollections. The story of a busy life.



Boyhood and Manhood Recollections.

THE STORY OF A BUSY LIFE.

By G. Q. COLTON, 19 COOPER INSTITUTE, NEW YORK.

WITH SOME AUTOGRAPH SIGNATURES AND SENTIMENTS.

- "Now, good digestion wait on appetite, And health on both."—Shakespeare.
- "His best companions innocence and health,

 And his best riches ignorance of wealth,"

 —Goldsmith.
- "Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust."
 —Oliver Wendell Holmes.
- "Put your best manhood into every work you undertake."
 —Robert Collyer.

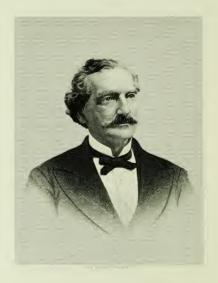
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" To Dr. G. Q. COLTON :

"How shall we thank thee, friend, for the great boon Of freedom, from the horror we must face But for the tender touch, the moment's grace Thou givest us. The sweet and pleasant swoon Through which we pass, when the dire day is ours Of agony past bearing, and the strife Which robs us of our rest, and makes our life Seem but a gift of all the evil powers. Gently we breather thy blessing, fall on sleep To wake and wonder; there is no more pain, No hopeless, hapless drift from bad to worse, But gracious benedictions, true and deep; Gladness which may not choose to laugh or weep, When all the springs of life run sweet again."

-Robert Collyer.

BOYHOOD AND MANHOOD

RECOLLECTIONS.

For some years past a few of my friends have been urging me to write out the story of my life, to which I have consented.

Perhaps my story will give heart and courage to boys born in poverty, and who look upon the future as dark and discouraging. During my past eighty-three years I have seen something of the world, and have had to do with some interesting experiences.

And now for my story.

I was born among the green hills of Vermont, on the 7th of February, 1814. I was the youngest of twelve children—ten sons and two daughters.

There was a brook near our house, and a bridge over it, a punder the bridge. At the age of three or four I used to run to this bridge, lay down on my stomach on the end of the planks, and look down into the water. My folks had forbidden my going to the bridge, fearing I might fall in and be drowned. As I lay there one day a man came along on tip-toe, caught me by the heels, and pitched me over head first into the water. Well, I didn't go to that bridge any more!

When old enough I wound quills and bobbins for my father to weave. Being the youngest of the family, I was the last to be provided for. I wonder if, in those days, I ever had a new garment. I had to wear the mended and patched garments of my older brothers, which were reduced to my size. I did not get my cowhide shoes till into January, and (they said) I was so tickled on getting them that I carried them under my arm several days rather than soil them. And yet I would go out barefoot and slide down hill with the boys when the thermometer was at

zero. The violent exercise kept me warm. Manya time I would wake up in the morning and find a snowdrift on my bed, the snow having blown through the leaky roof. I think I did not have an overcoat till I was near twenty years of age. Did I suffer from the cold? Not a bit of it.

At the age of fourteen I went to work on a farm for one of my brothers. At the age of sixteen my father wished me to study with a view of going through college. I commenced to attend the academy, but my eyes failed me, and the project had to be given up. I was then apprenticed to a man in St. Albans to learn the chair-making trade. I served faithfully five years, or till I was twenty-one. My master allowed his boys five dollars a year for spending money. But as my wants were beyond this I rang the church bell at six o'clock in the morning all one winter, the merchants paying me one dollar each for the service. This enabled me to attend the circus with my sweetheart when one came along. Speaking of a circus reminds me of the first circus I ever attended. I was about eight years of age, and wanted to go. But father said "No." and with him no ended the matter, But on this occasion, as all the boys in the neighborhood had gone, father relented, and said, "Do you really want to go?"
"Yes, sir," said I. "Well, go." I had not a cent of money, but I went. The distance was two miles, but distance didn't count in a boy with lightning in his heels. On arriving, I found all the people inside the big tent; and so I sat down on a stone in the yard to enjoy the music. It was the first time I ever heard a band, and the music sounded heavenly in my young ears. The doorkeeper saw me and said. "Boy, come here." I walked up, "Have you got any money?" "No. sir." said I. "Well, you may go in." Shall I ever forget that man? I have no doubt he has gone to Heaven. He certainly took "pity on the poor." In I walked, just the happiest little fellow out of Paradise. What a sight! men and women riding round standing on the backs of horses, with nothing to hold on to! "It's a shame," said I to a boy next to me, "for those women to wear such short dresses, and bare legs." "Them isn't bare legs," said the boy; "they are colored stockings." "Well, they must be very long, for I see no top to 'em." "And that clown, he must be a fool to dress so." After finishing my apprenticeship in 1835, I came to New York and commenced work as a journeyman. I was set to making bird'seye-maple and scroll-top cane-seat chairs. After a few months' practice, I got so that I could easily make one dozen a day, for which I was paid \$2.50 a dozen, or \$1.5 a week. I paid \$3.50 a week for board. I made a dozen of these chairs, and gave six of them to one sister, and six to another, as a present. They were made upon honor, and, although they have been in daily use for sixty years, they are as sound to-day as when they left my hands. In making those chairs I think I practised what I have heard Rev. Robert Collyer say, "Whatever you undertake to do. do vour best."

In the winter of 1825 to 1826, that first GREAT FIRE took place in New York, and swept everything off from Wall Street down to the river. When the alarm was given, like all boys from the country I started out and went to it. We had no steam engines then, only hand machines, worked by the old "Volunteer Fire Department," Arriving at Wall Street, I went with a gang of men to carry goods from the stores to a place of safety. We brought the goods across Wall Street, and deposited them in the banks, where they were all saved. Other gangs of men carried goods the other way, and deposited them in the old Dutch church, filling the building. These were all burnt up. It was so cold that the water in the hose froze solid, so there was but little that the firemen could do. The temperature must have been far below zero, for the water falling on our shoulders was soon converted into ice. I went there the next day, and, in crossing Wall Street, I walked through mud several inches deep, formed from molasses and whiskey that had been spilled and did not freeze. Large quantities of tea, in boxes, were piled up on one of the docks. All was burned, leaving a great pile of tea smouldering on the top. The next day crowds of poor women came along, knocked off the top and then took handfuls of fresh tea and deposited it in their aprons. The hard-hearted watchmen stopped it, as it was against the law. If I remember right. we had no policemen then, only watchmen. Better let the poor women have the tea, than let the fire consume it.

After working several years at chair-making, my older

brothers said if I wished to study medicine, they would help me

a proposition which I accepted.

About this time. I went to Longmeadow, Mass., on a visit to relatives One Sunday I walked up to Springfield four miles distant, and attended the Unitarian Church, and heard Rev. W. B. O. Peabody, D.D., preach. That sermon by Dr. Peabody gave me some new ideas, and set me to thinking and reading on theological subjects. I read everything I could get hold of bearing on the subject. I was in trouble. My old belief was being upset. My brother A-was then pastor of the First Congregational church at Amherst. He heard that I had been to a Unitarian church, and wrote a letter to my brother in this city, in which he used the following language: "I am utterly ashamed of Brother G---. He has been to a Unitarian church. It is in the mouth of all our friends on the river. If he had done the same thing in Amherst, I should have requested him never to come and see me again till he had changed his course. I hope he acted from impulse and regrets it now, or that he can say something to relieve the darkness of the picture." I got a copy of this letter, and then wrote a letter to the Christian Register in Boston, copying what my brother had said about me, and then quoted from Dr. Channing on the right of private judgment, and where he speaks of chains more galling to the spirit than any that can be put upon the limbs. For a year I was in great mental anxiety and trouble. My feelings were with my friends and the belief in which I had been brought up, while my reason and judgment were on the other side with the new light I had obtained. After a long struggle, I said to myself, "I will take Christ for my guide, and try to follow His precepts and example." When this became my settled belief, I found peace. I got rid of the fear of death, which had haunted me, more or less, during my old belief. Some of my orthodox friends wished me to read a volume of letters which were written by and between Prof. Stuart. of Andover, and Rev. Henry Ware, of Boston. These letters contain a clear and logical Scriptural argument on both sides. I read them all with the closest attention, and they only confirmed me in my new faith.

Towards the close of my medical studies, I gave a series of

lectures, or rather experiments, illustrating the subject of chemistry, for a young ladies' seminary in this city. Among other things I made the nitrous oxide, or laughing gas. The young ladies inhaled it, and under its exhibitating influence laughed and danced. My fellow students, on learning that I could make the gas, wished me to make it for them. I did so, and we had lots of fun with it in the anatomical lecture-room. One student said to me, "Why don't you bring out a grand exhibition in the great Broadway Tabernacle, and fill your pockets?" The thing got into my head, and I determined to carry it out. I went to Mr. Hale, proprietor of the Journal of Commerce, who owned the Tabernacle, laid the matter before him, but said I had no money, He finally agreed that I might have the Tabernacle one evening for \$50, and pay him after the exhibition. I then wanted \$75 to get out bills and advertise. My brother would not let me have it, for he felt sure that I would lose money. But another brother, in Philadelphia, loaned me the money. I then worked the thing up for about three weeks. The tickets were put at twenty-five cents each, and I gave away a good many in order to be sure of a respectable show. Well, the affair came off, and my receipts were \$535! I cleared over \$400 above all my expenses. This was in the spring of 1844. The success of that one exhibition determined me to go on in the business. I gave exhibitions during that summer in all the principal towns and cities of New England. On the 10th of December following, I gave an exhibition in Hartford, Conn., at which Dr. Horace Wells made the discovery of anasthesia-the fact that something could be breathed which would destroy all pain in a surgical operation. Up to this time there was no such thing known as relief from pain in surgery or dental operations. The discovery was made in this way: I gave the gas to a young man by the name of Cooley, and while under its exhilarating influence he began to dance and jump about. He ran against some wooden settees on the stage, and bruised his shins badly. As the effect of the gas passed off, he took his seat next to Dr. Wells, who said to him, "You must have hurt yourself." Cooley began to feel some pain then, and was astonished to find his legs all bloody. He said he did not feel a particle of pain till the effects of the gas had passed off.

While the audience were going out. Dr. Wells said to me, "Why cannot a man have a tooth pulled while under the gas and not feel it?" I replied that I did not know. Dr. Wells said he believed it could be done, and would try it on himself if I would bring a hag of gas to his office. The next day I went to his office with a bag of gas. Dr. Wells called in Dr. Riggs, a neighboring dentist, to draw his tooth. I gave the gas, and Dr. Riggs took out the tooth. On recovering, and finding his tooth out, Dr. Wells exclaimed. "It is the greatest discovery ever made. I didn't feel it so much as the brick of a bin !" That was the first tooth ever drawn without pain. I instructed Dr. Wells how to make the gas, and then went off on my exhibition business. Dr. Wells used the gas in his dental practice all of the following year. 1845. He then went to Europe on account of failing health, During his absence in Europe, his former pupil, Dr. Morton, called on Dr. Jackson, a chemist of Boston, to learn how to make the gas, as he wished to test the truth of Wells' pretended discovery. Dr. Jackson said to him, "That gas exhilarates. If that will destroy pain, sulphuric ether will do the same." Upon this hint. Dr. Morton gets some ether and tries it on a boy for the extraction of a tooth. That first experiment with ether took place on the 30th of September, 1846, nearly two years after Wells'. When Dr. Wells returned to the United States in the latter part of 1847, a violent discussion took place between him and Morton in regard to the honor of the discovery of anæsthesia. During this discussion Dr. Wells became deranged and committed suicide. He died on the 24th of January, 1848. No one had tried the gas save Wells, and so Morton set up the claim that nitrous oxide was not an anæsthetic, and therefore he. Morton. was the discoverer of anæsthesia! I was off lecturing then on chemistry and natural philosophy, and, occasionally, giving exhibitions of the laughing gas.

About this time, Prof. Morse took me into his office and gave me full instructions in regard to the contruction and operation of his magnetic telegraph, and afterwards allowed me to announce a lecture on the telegraph, under his "auspices," in the Broadway Tabernacle. He loaned me a register for the purpose. I had a large wooden model made, representing the prin-

cipal parts, which could be seen all over the house. I had a strip of canvas with the dots and lines opposite the letters. The telegraph line was only then completed from Philadelphia to Newark. Just before dark Prof. Morse went to Newark and had a message sent from Philadelphia and dated at a certain minute. With this he jumped upon an engine which brought him to Iersey City. He handed me the message just as I was going upon the stage. I stated these facts and read the message to the audience. The message was this: "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee. Here we are." This was the first message by telegraph received in New York, and it excited "thunders of applause." Prof. Morse said I made one or two slight mistakes in my lecture, but on the whole he was so well pleased with it that he gave me the register with a letter of unqualified recommendation to the public as being able to explain his telegraph. With this letter I travelled and lectured all over the United States

While lecturing on the telegraph, and knowing the power of an electro-magnet, I conceived the idea of constructing an electric engine which could be driven on a track by electricity. I got a machinist by the name of Lilly to carry out my idea. The motor was made. I had a track or wheel made on which to run it. Attached to the engine I had two or three passenger cars filled with dolls for passengers.

A few years ago I met Mr. George B. Prescott, who wrote those three large volumes on the applications of electricity, published by the Appletons. He said to me: "Do you know that you were the first man that ever applied electricity to the propulsion of cars?" I replied that I did not know it. He continued: "You are. I attended a lecture of yours in Pittsburg, Penn., in 841. Would had a little circular railroad about six feet in diameter, with an engine driven by two electro-magnets, the wires being attached to the track. You will find the whole fully described in one of my volumes." I got no patent for my engine, as I did not suppose there was any money in it. When a thing is made public, no patent can be obtained on it. There was a big lawsuit pending in Chicago on the patent for the trolley cars. One of the lawyers engaged in the case, living in this city, saw

the notice of the engine published by Mr. Prescott, and wrote out to Pittsburg, inquiring if there was a Dr. Colton, who, in 1847, exhibited a circular railroad there on which an engine was driven by electricity. The word came back that there was, but whether he was dead or alive they did not know. At the close of the letter it was added. "Perhans he is the laughing-gas man." That brought the lawyer to me. "Yes," I said, "I am the man." "Well, where is the engine?" I could remember nothing about it, as it had been stored away somewhere since 1847. "It must be found," said he, "at any cost, as it may decide a question of a million dollars." I remembered that when I closed my lecturing I left some of my apparatus up in Vermont where my friends live. I went up there and asked my daughter if she knew abything about the apparatus I left there in 1847. She replied, "Before your sister died she sent a big trunk here. I believe it contains some of your stuff. It is up in our garret," I went up, opened the trunk, and there was the engine! I brought it home and had a new track made for it. It is now in my office in the Cooper Institute, and when any one comes in who cares to see it, it affords me pleasure to turn on the electricity and send it round the track.

But I am getting a little ahead of my story. In 1846, our government, in anticipation of the Mexican war, sent a squadron of war vessels to California and took possession of the country, My brother Walter was the chaplain of the squadron. On arriving at Monterey the commander, Commodore Stockton, appointed Walter chief alcalde or civil governor. This office he filled for three years, or till 1849. Soon after he arrived he found a font of Spanish type all in pi in the cell of a monk. With this he printed the first newspaper ever printed in California. It was The Californian. A copy of it lays before me. In size it is about 12 by 14 inches, four pages, and printed on paper that came wrapped around tobacco. In the Spanish language there is no letter w, so they had to put two v's together to make a w. In this paper Walter issued his orders one of which was forbidding all gambling. In nearly all houses gambling was going on. He would enter the house with his officers and fine every man found there \$20 and the owner of the house \$100. With this money he built the first school-house ever built in California.

According to the rules in the navy, Walter could receive no salary as governor, only his salary as chaplain. When the gold was discovered the marines and under-officers of these vessels all ran away to the mines. Commodore Stockton then sold at auction the provisions with which the war ships were supplied. Walter and Captain Marcy invested \$1,500 each in these provisions and employed two young men to take them to the mines and sell them at the best lay they could, agreeing to give them one half they made out of the speculation. I do not remember how long they were gone, perhaps two months. On their return, Walter's share, one-quarter, was \$40,000! At that time there was nothing cheap but gold in the mines. People rushed off with nothing but implements for digging.

Early in 1840 Walter wrote for me to come out there, as he thought I might do well. I started early in February, sailing in the steamer Panama, which went around the Horn, or rather through the Straits. We were a hundred and ten days on the journey, including the stoppages. While stopping in Panama I came within a hair's breadth of losing my life. There are no docks there, and our steamer had to lay off in the stream. One day it steamed down to Toboga, seven miles distant, to take in water I was left and had to reach Toboga by the little market boat-a dugout-managed by two boys. We arrived at the steamer about ten o'clock at night, and it was so dark I could not see my hand before my face. As the boat was gliding along near the ladder of the steamer some one stepped on the side of the hoat and turned us all out into the water. I could not swim. but I happened to catch hold of a rope, which held me up. A rone was thrown to me from the steamer, which I wound around my body, and was drawn up. Had it not been for the rope which I caught hold of I should have gone down and furnished a good meal for the sharks, of which the bay was full. But a kind Providence saved me for a better use. We arrived in San Francisco on the 10th of May. The whole place was covered with tents, with here and there an old adobe house. A few wooden buildings were being erected. It was too early to go to the mines, as the water in the rivers was too high for surface digging. My four partners hired out as carpenters at ten dollars a day each, while I kept the tent and was "chief cook and bottle washer." All that my partners knew of carpentering was that they could drive a nail. But their employer was glad to get them at that.

Before starting for California, I wrote to my brother Aand told him I thought he had done me great injustice in writing that letter to my brother in this city, and that I was never more conscientious in my life than I was in entertaining my liberal views. But as I was going to California, and might never see him again. I desired to extend the hand of brotherly love, and forget the past. He answered the letter immediately, and said he was sorry he wrote that letter; that it was done under the impulse of the moment, and he hoped I would forgive and forget it. This smoothed out everything between us. We often had friendly talks and arguments on theological subjects. He was a firm believer in the doctrine of the "bodily resurrection." I have since regretted that I did not ask him what the resurrection would be in my case after I am cremated, as I expect to be, converted into gas, and "blown about the pendent world," as Shakespeare puts it. He probably would have replied, "You now seem to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." What could I have said to that? I should probably have acted out the thought of Lacon, "Silence is better than a had reply."

Since I became converted to a more liberal faith, I have often wondered how and when that terrible doctrine of "eternal punishment" became a doctrine of the Church. The Catholics are far more lenient than our orthodox Protestants, for they send a bad man to "purgatory," and then pray for "the repose of his soul," or to get him out. The Protestants send a man to hell, and continue him there through an endless eternity, and do not so much as offer a prayer for his relief,

Ask any good orthodox brother, "Do you believe there is any end to the suffering of those who go to hell?" and he will answer, "No." Then if a man goes to hell and suffers ten millions of years, he is no nearer the end of his suffering than when he

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commenced! This is in the creed of every orthodox Protestant Church. Can any one deny it? These doctrines were taught in the time of Shakespeare, for the ghost of Hamlet's father says to Hamlet:

"My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself."

And, again, he says:

"I am thy father's spirit:
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my day of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away."

This faith in the power of prayer to get a soul out of purgatory has always been entertained by the Roman Catholic Church. Millions of dollars have been spent in building beautiful chapels in cathedrals all over Europe, that the faithful who come there bryay may remember the soul of the giver. A rich man, approaching his end, knows he cannot carry his gold with him, and so he concludes to purchase prayers for "the repose of his soul"?

In "The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy," by Laurence Sterne, Uncle Toby says to Corporal Trim, "God Almighty is so good and just a governor of this world, that if we
have but done our duties in it, it will never be inquired into
whether we have done them in a red coat or a black one.

In an earnest discussion with Trim, as to how they might save the life of a poor soldier, Uncle Toby forgets himself and utters an oath: "the accusing spirit which flew up to Heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in, and the recording angel, as he wrote it down, dropped a tear upon the word, and blotted it out for ever."

Some one said to Uncle Toby, that the devil had been consigned to a burning hell for all eternity. "Well, I'm sorry for him," said Uncle Toby.

John G. Whittier wrote in a lady's album:
"Our lives are albums written through

"Our lives are albums written through With good or ill, with false or true; And as the blessed angels turn The pages of our years, God grant they read the good with smiles, And blot the ill with tears."

But enough of this.

Finally we went up to the mines, where we worked four and a half months, or till the rainy season came on. One night a big strapping fellow came to our tent, woke me up and wanted me to draw a tooth for him. I told him I was no tooth-drawer. though I had a pair of forceps with me. I looked at the tooth; it was a big upper molar. I said it was impossible for me to draw that tooth. "Well," said he, "I want you to try. I'll pay you whether you get it out or not." And so I applied the forceps and pulled, and wrenched and wrenched, using all the power I had in my arms, but never started it. "Well," said he, "I'm satisfied. You have scared the ache out of it, anyway. I'll pay you." And so I only charged him \$8, half price! When the rainy season came on we all returned to San Francisco to spend the winter. I had saved just \$400 and had not gambled one dollar, as almost everybody did. San Francisco had grown to be almost a city. I wrote home to my wife that California was a humbug, but that I could do something to make a living during the winter, and in the spring should come home or return to the mines. She wrote back that if I would come straight home and had my health she would never say a word about the "California Enterprise." On the day before I received this letter I put a letter into the office for my wife with drafts for \$10 000 in it! How did I get this money? In connection with another man I opened a hospital for the care of those needing nursing. I borrowed money to fit up the building, paving 10 per cent, a month interest. It was the lowest interest at which money could be had, no matter how good the security. Soon after this, Governor Riley, who succeeded my brother Walter, appointed me the first Justice of the Peace for San Francisco. This office gave me the power to make land grants for town lots, the coroner's business, and the trial of all causes under \$100. (We were then under the old Spanish laws.) I published my commission and opened an office in the same building with the alcalde, Mr. Geary, afterwards Governor of Pennsylvania, I had a smart young lawver for clerk, paying him \$500 a month salary. There were no statute laws then in California, and all I had to do was to administer justice between man and man. I knew nothing about law, but I had a little common-sense. Business came rushing in upon me. The fees were large in those gold times, and I had all that I could possibly attend to. In every law case I put plaintiff and defendant, with all their witnesses, under oath, and asked every question in order to get at the facts of the case. I then gave my decision, from which there was no appeal. If I felt in doubt in regard to the testimony, I said to the losing party, "Come in to-morrow and I will give you the papers and you can take the case up to the Court of First Instance." But I never had a case appealed. In those times a hundred dollars was but "a drop in the bucket." Many of the cases brought before me were for cheating in gambling, The only satisfaction I could give either party was to summon old gamblers to give testimony in regard to the rules of the game. I never knew an old Californian charged with cheating. When the new State Constitution came into power my office ceased, and I came home. Before leaving San Francisco, the City Council disputed my right to make land grants and sued me for \$250,000. I had written authority and instructions to make the grants from the Prefect of the District, to whom the Council as well as myself were responsible for our official acts. When this was shown to the lawyers opposed to me, the case was abandoned before trial.

Having my pockets pretty well filled with money, I sent my brother A.— \$500. This act so softened his views regarding my "heterodoxy" that he allowed I might, at last, find "the gates ajar." It is said that charity covers a multitude of sins. Well, money covers a good many more.

After arriving home I floated about several years doing little or nothing. One winter I spent in Boston, and wrote paragraphs and reported sermons for the Boston Transcript. I made one unfortunate investment, which swept off nearly all I had left in the world. Being now at the bottom of 'the wheel of fortune," I resumed my lectures and laughing gas exhibitions, which I continued several years.

In June, 1863, I went to New Haven, Conn., to give a series of schibitions. In order to make sure of having some "subjects" who would inhale the gas at the public schibition, I invited thirty or forty gentlemen to a private entertainment. To these gentlemen I detailed the facts regarding Dr. Wells, but said I could never induce a dentist to try the gas. Among others present was Dr. J. H. Smith, a prominent dentist of New Haven. After the entertainment Dr. Smith said to me that he would try the gas if I would give it. The next day I went to his office. While there an old lady—wealthy and known to everybody—came in. She had been trying to have Dr. Smith give her chloroform and extract seven teeth, but he declined to do it unless she would bring her physician to take the responsibility.

Dr. Smith introduced me, and, after talking with her a little she said, "I'll try the gas." That same day I carried a bag sato Dr. Smith's office, gave it to the lady, and Dr. Smith extracted the seven teeth. On recovering and finding her teeth out the lady said to me, "Don't go, doctor; I want to gite your blessing!" She said I might mention her name to my audience, and state the fact that she had had seven teeth drawn while under the gas, and without any pain or any unpleasant effects from the gas. I did so.

I then made arrangements with Dr. Smith that I would furnish and administer the gas for one week, he should draw the teeth, and we would divide the proceeds. Before the week was out the rooms were crowded with patients, and we continued the business for three weeks and two days. During this time we extracted a little over three thousand teeth! Thinks I, this is a better business than lecturing, sometimes to "a beggarly account of empty boxes."

I at once determined to go to New York and establish an institution devoted exclusively to the extraction of teeth with the gas. The gas had laid dead and forgotten as an annesthetic for seventeen years—viz., from the time Dr. Wells started for Europe in 1845, to 1865, when I revived it. And so, while I have always given the honor of the discovery of anæsthesia to Dr. Wells, had I not revived its use it might never have been thought of again. So that practically, the world is indebted to me for the gas.

I opened my office in the Cooper Institute in July, 1863, and called my institution "The Colton Dental Association," as my name had been so long identified with the gas.

On the 4th of February following, I commenced to ask my patients to write their names on a scroll, so that I could tell at any time how many patients I had given the gas to. The numbers are printed on the margin. The present scroll number is allite over one hundred and ninety-three thousand, eight hundred—193,800. In all this number I have never had an accident from the gas. I have given it to children of three years of age, and to quite a number over ninety—Peter Cooper amone the latter.

Before commencing my present business. I chanced to meet Mr. P. T. Barnum, and told him of the success of our operations in New Haven, and that I intended to start business in New York. Mr. Barnum then gave me a bit of advice which I think is worthy of being repeated here. As near as I can remember, these were his words. "Let me give you a word of advice. You are going to make some money. As soon as it is known that you have a little spare money, you will have all sorts of schemes offered you-mining stocks, patent schemes, and the like, by which the parties will prove to you an taker that you can make money a great deal faster than in your legitimate business. Now don't touch a thing of the kind: say No to every such thing. As soon as you get any spare money put it into government bonds. or real estate and never mind the small interest." That advice has saved me thousands of dollars, and would have saved me much more if I had strictly followed it. In every instance in which I disregarded this advice I lost money. Mr. Barnum may be called "a humbug," but he had a clear head for making and saving money. To his credit it must be said that he gave more than a half million of dollars in charity and for public improvements in Bridgeport. Thousands of young men, starting in business with a small capital, have been ruined by not following the advice which Mr. Barnum gave to me.

I am now eighty-three years of age and in sound bodily health; was never sick but once in my life. Would I live my life over again? On some accounts, "Yes," for I think I might correct some of the mistakes I have made. On the whole, I have had a pleasant journey, and never worried about anything. I have lived in the sunshine and seen very few dark days. I think I can truly say of myself, in the language of old Adam in "As You Like It,"

> "Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty: For in my youth I never did apply Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood; Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo The means of weakness and debility; Therefore my age is a lusty winter, Frosty, but kindly."

There are a few lessons to be drawn from my story.

First. It is an inestimable blessing to have been born of Christian parents who put their trust in God and hold honor and honesty of higher value than money.

Second. It is no disparagement to a boy to have been born poor. With a good father and mother's blessing he can make his way in the world if he has the right stuff in him.

Third. If you would live to a good old age, let all intoxicating liquors alone.

Early in the late war Mr. Robert Bonner suggested that Hon. Edward Everett be invited to deliver an oration in this city and devote the proceeds for the benefit of the widows and orphans of our soldiers. The "management" of the affair was put into my hands. I drew up an invitation for the oration which I got signed by a large number of our most distinguished citizens. Mr. Everett accepted the invitation and suggested that the receipts be divided between New York and Boston. Mr. Bonner replied: "Give it all to New York, and I will give you my check for \$\$,000 for Boston."

Mr. Everett accepted the proposition. The oration was delivered in the Academy of Music on the 4th of July, 1861. The subject was, "The State of the Country."

On the evening before the oration Mr. Bonner gave me his check for \$1,000, which I handed to Mr. Everett at the Everett House.

The letters of invitation and acceptance, with the advertisements, were published in all our papers, free of charge. I put the tickets in the bookstores on Broadway, and before the day of the oration every ticket was sold, &t each, to all parts of the house. "No reserved seats." Every seat and every inch of standing room in the house was occupied. The Seventy-first Regiment, with band, escorted Mr. Everett to the Academy. On arriving at the Academy the aisles were so packed that Mr. Everett and the Regiment were compelled to enter by the stage door. There were a thousand people in front of the entrance doors before the opening, and, although the orders were, "No tickets for sale," the crush was so great that the ticket-takers were compelled to take the money, as the holders were wedged in and could not get back and out till the crush was over. Over \$500 owas handed to me of money thus taken. I do not remembe exact amount received for the oration, but it amounted to several thousand dollars.

I believe this act of generosity on the part of Mr. Bonner was never published in New York.

In answer to the invitation sent to Mr. Everett, the following reply was returned:

"Boston, 19th of June, 1861.

"GENTLEMEN:

"I have received your letter of the 28th ult., inviting me to deliver an address in the Academy of Music, on the great issues now before the country. I feel much honored by such a call, and I shall have great pleasure in obeying it at an early day. It has been suggested to me that the 4th of July would, as a public holiday, be a convenient day for the purpose. The anniversary of the great Declaration would certainly be an appropriate occasion for an attempt to vindicate the principles, now so formidably assailed, on which the independence of the United States as ONE PROPLE WAS originally asserted.

"I am, gentlemen, most respectfully yours,

-Edward Everett.

The Hon. Luther Bradish, Right Rev. Bishop Potter, Hon. The Hon. Hamilton Fish, Valentine Mott, M.D., Rev. Dr. Gardiner Spring, M. H. Grinell, Esq., Rev. Dr. Bellows, Maj.-Gen Dix, and the other gentlemen whose names are subscribed to the invitation. After finishing the story of my life, as above, a friend suggested that I could add interest to the pamphlet by inserting some of the letters I have received from prominent people, and especially from mottoes and sentiments written for my autograph book—a suggestion which I have adopted.

In 1841 I had a large and beautiful autograph book made for me, and alphabetically arranged. The first name written in it was that of John Quincy Adams. This was followed by Daniel Webster, W.M. C. Bryant, Charles Dickens, R. Waldo Emerson, Henry W. Longfellow, Charlotte Cushman, George P. Morris, S. G. Goodrich, Lewis Cass, W.M. L. Stone, Horace Greeley, L. H. Stoognere, W.M. H. Seward, Benjamin Silliman, Samuel Woodworth, Charles Sunner, John G. Whittier

After obtaining about a hundred more names of similar notoriety, I put the book away in my library, where it lay untouched for about thirty years. It then occurred to me that I would perfect it for my grandchildren. When I wrote for an autograph, I asked for a few lines or a sentiment. Among the many received, I select the following:

"Lord of the Universe, shield us and guide us,
Trusting Thee always through shadow and sun!
Thou hast united us—who shall divide us?
Keep us, O keep us, the Many in One."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

AMERICA.

"My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring."

-S. F. Smith.

[&]quot;Toil and trust."

"Law hath her seat in the bosom of God."

" MY DEAR SIR:

"I cannot answer half of the letters of some importance, and it would never do to neglect them and answer autograph solicitations—their name is legion. They devour one's leisure like locusts. I must refuse your request."

-Henry Ward Beecher.

"MY DEAR SIR :

"I send you very willingly my autograph, which you wish, and am most sincerely yours,

-Phillips Brooks.

"A poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more."

-Charlotte Cushman.

"The fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear."

- James Freeman Clarke.

"Mankind will improve and better its condition in proportions at icomes to see, know and understand that, what a man soweth that must he also reap—somewhere, somehow, and at some time; and that by the operation of laws, so wise and good, that they will never require to be altered, amended, or revoked."

-Peter Cooper.

"How cheap is immortality,

And what a penny trumpet fame;

If one need do no more than this,

And find that he has made a name!"

— John White Chadwick.

"There can be no true peace where there is wrong and oppression."
—Frederick Douglass.
"After the great battle of arms comes the battle of history. —J. A. Garfield.
"DEAR DR. COLTON: "I had hoped to see you again before this, I am my- self an enthusiast about autographs, and hope to have an oppor- tunity some time to show you my little collection. Like yours, I think it begins with John Quincy Adams." —Edw. E. Hale.
"Strive and thrive." ——Henry Hale.
"Never have anything to do with angels this side of the grave."
—Max O'Rell.
"Truth for authority, not authority for truth." —Lucretia Mott, in her 88th year.
"Peace if possible; justice at any rate." — Wendell Phillips, 1880.
"Jesus said, The poor ye have always with you, and when- soever ye will, ye can do them good." —Harriet Beecher Stowe.
"This is a grand world to live in, to those who use it nobly." —Rush R. Shippen.
"The truth-seeker is the only God-seeker." —M. I. Savase.

" DEAR FRIEND:

"Let me thank thee for the volume 'Shakespeare and the Bible.' It is a rare compilation and will be a valuable addition to the already large number of volumes devoted to the great author."

Thy friend.

-John G. Whittier.

"The dangerous boon alone to us
Is given, to choose 'twixt ill and well,
Rebellion or obedience, thus
To build our Heaven or dig our hell.
But one great thought our strength upholds,
Nothing shall perial! Though His rod

Smites sore, His mercy still enfolds
His own, God's souls are safe in God."

--Celia Thaxter.

"DEAR SON:

"I've just received the newspaper. I suppose it was a natural inference, but I could have stood. Were I nearer forty-eight han I am to those figures reversed, I should have still preferred to sit, and just where I did. Sitting (as Jesus did, when at thirty years of age He sate when He taught in the synagogue) makes meled more in accord with my hearers, more social; and sitting where I did, I felt nearer to you and to those precious remains. I would revive the Hebrew attitude of a teacher—I think the manner of our preachers would be more easy and natural that way."

-W. H. Furness.

In a letter to Rev. Mr. Collyer.

FROM THE MONUMENT OF GREELEY.

"The star may vanish, but a ray Sent forth, what mandate can recall? The circling wave still keeps its way That marked a turret's seaward fall. The least of music's uttered strains
Is part of Nature's voice forever,
And, aye, beyond the grave remains
The great, the good man's high endeavor."

— Edmand Clarence Stedman

"Because right is right, to follow right

Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence "

December 16, 1896. —Seth Low.

"October 27, 1883.

"My DEAR OLD HERETIC:

"My friend Styles says that if suitably asked, you would lecture for his church, and I hereby not only ask, but beseech you to do so. Plymouth Church will open itself for you any week night, and who knows, if you make good use of your opportunities, but that you may yet capture a Sunday in it?

"Friend Styles is doing a good work in a region that needs it.
"With grateful love, I am yours,"

-Henry Ward Beecher.

A letter to Rev. Robert Collver.

"Consider nothing as fully settled that is not right,"

— Hannibal Hamlin.

Several years ago, when my daughter-in-law was in deep morning for the loss of her son, she received a letter from an morthodox lady in Massachusetts, advising her to "Go to Jesus"; and at the close of her letter quoted the whole of the little hymn by Oliver Wendell Holmes, which was written by one of the characters in "The Professor at the Breakfast Table." My daughter answered the letter, saying "I go to the Father every day, asking for strength. If I had a favor to ask of you I would go to to two. but not to your daughter!"

When I was returning home from Europe, many years ago, I saw a book lying on one of the chairs on the upper deck of the steamer. I picked it up and read a few pages. I was de-



lighted. It was "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." On reaching home I purchased all of Dr. Holmes' works and commenced reading them in course. When I had finished the "Fourth of July Oration" I wrote a letter to Dr. Holmes, telling him how delighted I had been in reading his books. But I said that I thought his July Oration, though containing passages of rare eloquence, was a rather "labored production" for him, as he seemed not in his element. It was like taking a sculptor from his studio and setting him to make a stone wall. The wall would, no doubt, be very fine, beautiful and tall; and it would stand, if the wind didn't blow it over! But the old farmer would make a better wall, with a broader base, and not so tall, and it would last much longer. I said, regarding his books, I liked "The Guardian Angel" best. In answer to my letter, Dr. Holmes wrote me the following:

"Boston, February 24, 1888.

"MY DEAR SIR:

"My circular will show you why I do not write long letters. But there is so much that interests me in your letter that I sit down myself for a brief reply." I have not read "The Guardian Angel" or my "Fourth of July Oration" for a long time. I am glad you found an interest in the story, but my own favorite is "Blsie Venner." As to the "Fourth of July Oration," you are, I think, not far out of the way. It was an effort I felt bound to make, and answered its purpose. But you must not attribute the saying, 'I had not time enough to make it short,' to Daniel Webster. I have found it in Pascal, and it may very possibly be much older.

"How strange that you should quote that lady's saying to your daughter in a letter to me just at this time! I said yesterday almost the same thing your daughter said with reference to the intervention of another personality between the human child and the Heavenly Father. I say yesterday—I am not sure that it was not this morning. But I am used to strange coincidences.

"If you will look in the last number of the Atlantic Monthly, you will find one of them related.

"About that hymn of mine, 'O Love Divine, that Stooped to Share,' Mr. Martineau wanted to alter to 'that stoop'st to

share,' but I would not have it. It was written in character by the young lady called 'Iris,' in 'The Professor at the Breakfast Table,' and if there is too much orthodoxy in it, that is her fault.

"It is no 'presumption' at all for an unknown friend to write me a letter, still less for a gentleman well and honorably known as yourself. But I do not often write so long a letter as this, and I do not know what Dr. Williams, the famous oculist, who has just left me after a friendly, not professional, visit, would say to my doing it. I do not pretend to keep up regular correspondence.

"With kind regards, yours very truly,"

-Oliver Wendell Holmes.





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